



READER NUTRITION TIPS

by Alexis Williams

Do you ever read nutrition articles and think, “Sure, that works for those health gurus, but it won’t work for me”? With that in mind, we asked Running Room followers on Facebook to share their best nutrition advice. Here are some of the responses:

Make vegetables the star of your plate. Michelle from Cheticamp, Nova Scotia says that you should “fill half your plate with veggies, and the other half with protein and starches.” When planning meals, decide on the vegetables first. Choose a variety of brightly coloured ones and aim for at least two different kinds at each meal. Reyna from Prince George, B.C. also notes that the peels and skins of many fruits and vegetables contain a lot of nutrients. Be sure to wash your produce well if you are going to eat the skin.

Eat real food. Warren from St. Albert, Alberta says: “Avoid buying your meals at a drive-thru or over the phone. Keep adding healthy, real food, which will eventually push the bad stuff out.” This is a great example of how making small positive additions to your diet replaces the less healthy options. Sharon from Toronto is spot-on with her tip: “don’t buy diet or light products—as athletes, we need healthy fats.” In most cases, “light” products have added sugars, refined carbohydrates or salt to replace fats. For high-fat and high-calorie foods, focus on enjoying less of the real thing. Another simple tip from a follower: “Food is fuel. Eat accordingly.”

Think about pre and post-run nutrition. Lots of followers weighed in on what works for them, but perhaps the best piece of advice came from Jessica in Regina, Saskatchewan. Her approach? “Figure out what helps you run without feeling sick or heavy and stick with that! Don’t change what you eat if you don’t want to deal with unexpected issues.” The importance of practicing what works for you in training and sticking with it for races is paramount to nutrition success. Nikki from Burnaby, B.C. sums it up: “Go carbohydrate-heavy prior to exercise (energy!), protein-heavy post exercise (repair!), and of course, hydration

and replenishing of electrolytes always”. It is sound advice to choose easy-to-digest carbohydrates before a workout, followed by a post-run snack or meal with at least 10 to 20 grams of protein and carbohydrates (if you’ve gone for a longer run where your glycogen stores have been depleted). Amber from North Bay, Ontario mentions the importance of protein as well: “Post-run, make sure you get some protein within an hour to help repair those hard-working muscles! I find it difficult to eat right after a long run, but a bit of protein powder with almond milk or a boiled egg are key to jump-starting that recovery process.”

Go bananas. This handy, portable fruit was a top choice of many respondents. Michelle from Moncton, New Brunswick shared that one of her favourite post-workout snacks is bananas with peanut butter. Why are bananas so popular? They are filling, easy to digest and high in potassium—the ultimate on-the-go energy bar.

Thank you to all the followers who submitted tips! **RR**

